

Madam Speaker,

I rise today in support of H.R. 3999, the National Highway Bridge Reconstruction and Inspection Act. Maintaining our infrastructure, especially our bridges, is vital to enhancing our economy, improving our quality of life, and most importantly protecting the safety of our constituents. I thank Chairman Oberstar for introducing this important legislation and for his leadership in maintaining our nation's infrastructure.

My district is highly impacted by the structural integrity of our bridges. They provide the necessary infrastructure to support one of the largest ports in the U.S. with more than 25 million tons of cargo moving through the port each year. Most importantly, these bridges serve millions of people who travel on them to and from New York City each year.

In response to the tragic I-35-W bridge collapse in Minneapolis, Minnesota, New Jersey undertook an extensive review of bridges and identified the improvements required to bring all of the state's structurally deficient bridges to a state of good repair. This bill will help to further that initiative and increase the safety of our bridges.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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